



# ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

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## HISTORIC PROPERTIES

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### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES



#### ASPHALT ROOFING MATERIALS



Asphalt hexagonal shingles were used as alternative wall coverings in gable ends and dormers.

Composition roofing materials using fabrics covered with pine tar or sand were in use on the East Coast by the 1840s. This form was later improved through coatings of asphalt and talc, sand, powdered limestone or gravel to add color and endurance. Modern roofing shingles were formed from units of felt saturated with asphalt, a bitumen produced from refined petroleum, and colored mineral or ceramic granules. Shingles cut from rolls in 8" X 12-1/2" shapes made their appearance in 1903 in rectangular and hexagonal forms. The Prepared Roofing Manufacturers Association was formed in 1911 to advance the sales of asphalt products and to improve upon them while widening the market. [60]

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While asphalt was not yet sweeping the nation as a wall covering in the early twentieth century, there were murmurings among the construction industry about applying it as siding in remodeling jobs. Architect Charles G. Pekar wrote in a 1918 issue of *American Builder* that chipped slate asphalt roll roofing could be used as a substitute for stucco in the gable end of a house, creating a half-timbered effect. It also served as an insulating covering when nailed over drafty wooden drop siding. [61] Hexagonal and rectangular asphalt shingles marketed nationwide as wall covering did not appear until 1929. Those shingles can still be spied on sidewalls of dormers or on outbuildings in rural areas of Arkansas, however such coverings could have been roofing shingles applied pre-1929. Perhaps as a sign of the times asphalt was primarily offered as a renovation material that eliminated the need to paint wooden siding. Roofing companies were left with a glut of material when the Depression forestalled new construction, so they augmented their manufacturer's lines with offerings that catered to the current building market and offered the look of traditional materials at a lower price. Johns-Manville and Certain-teed Products Company offered a strip shingle with a 2-1/2" exposure and 9-1/2" length in imitation of brick in 1931. Each strip shingle was divided into individual "bricks" available in red, buff or gray featuring "mortar" lines in white, brown or black. Faux brick was the prevailing asphalt siding style during the 1930s. Mastic Corporation reported that 100% of its sales in 1935 were in the brick design marketed as panels called Inselbric, but wall shingles were still marketed in a variety of patterns and colors such as rectangular, hexagonal and pyramidal in green, tan and blended. [62]



Asphalt strip shingles in imitation of brick hit the market in the early 1930s.

were available. By



Asphalt rolls that imitated irregular courses of cut stone could be purchased by the early 1940s.

In 1940 Sears, Roebuck & Company catalogues offered brick-type insulating panels in 14" X 43" units, five bricks high and four-point (hexagonal) asphalt siding in brown tone, red tone, jade green and tile red. Advances in the production of roll roofing introduced heated rollers that pressed detailed patterns into granulated surfaces, making it possible to offer rolled asphalt brick siding in the early 1940s. [63] By 1941 Sears invited customers to "make old houses look new" by applying Honor Bilt Brick Roll-Type siding in 32" X 43' sections, which was offered in addition to the four brick double lap siding - marketed by the company beginning circa 1937. To lend a finished look to the job accessory strips for inside and outside corners, edge trim and soldier courses 1943 they included 32" X 43' asphalt rolls of irregularly coursed "ashlar stone" (also known as Inselstone) in gray. [64] The 1954 Sears catalogue introduced a new insulating stone design called "Ranch Stone", featuring elongated multi-colored asphalt units resembling cut-sandstone in irregular courses on 15" X 48" panels. Color selections were gray/green and crab orchard. [65] In 1966 the Sears, Roebuck catalogue featured "Random Stone" as a new siding product. This was very similar to Ranch Stone but it included randomly placed raked shapes in imitation of wire-cut bricks among the multi-colored units. Random Stone consisted of wood fiber insulation board impregnated with bitumen and thickly overlaid with mineral-stabilized asphalt on the weather side and surfaced with mineral granules for color. Color ranges became rather elaborate in comparison to earlier asphalt siding choices. The color selections were referred to as "Holiday," which was brown and light gray with coral highlights and beige mortar, "Riviera," consisting of shades of gray with occasional coral and gray mortar and "Lakeside," displaying green overtones with harmonizing gray and beige mortar. [66]



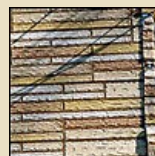
Garages and outbuildings would sometimes be sheathed in rectangular asphalt shingles.



Rolled asphalt brick siding was made possible through the introduction of heated rollers that pressed patterns into the surface.



The popular 1950s look of cut sandstone could be achieved through the inexpensive application of Ranch Stone asphalt siding.



Mid-1960s Random Stone was similar to Ranch Stone but it featured a wire-cut brick shape among the "courses" of stone shapes.

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